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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for improving adolescent social skills in order to reduce inappropriate behavioral choices in the classroom setting. The targeted population consisted of third, fifth, and sixth grade students expanding from lower to middle class communities. The lack of social skills in their learning environment was recorded through teacher observations, student surveys, and conduct referrals. The researchers showed evidence of the problem of the lack of social skills in their learning environment through teacher observations, student surveys, and conduct referrals. Additionally, the researchers reviewed the literature pertaining to probable causes for students displaying behaviors that were inappropriate in the classroom. Researchers reviewed the literature pertaining to solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others and developed an action plan predicated on the strategies. The literature indicated that students lacked appropriate social skills in the classroom. The researchers used cooperative learning as a strategy for improving the behaviors and social skills of their students. The researchers gathered post data in the form of teacher observations, student surveys, and conduct referrals. The post data indicated an increase in the students' use of appropriate social skills. This determined that the implementation of solution strategies was successful. (Contains 2 appendixes and 80 references.) (Author/JDM)

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IMPROVING SOCIAL SKILLS THROUGH COOPERATIVE LEARNING

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

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Saint Xavier University & IRI/Skylight

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Researchers reviewed the literature pertaining to solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others and developed an action plan predicated on the strategies. The literature indicated that students lacked appropriate social skills in the classroom. The researchers used cooperative learning as a strategy for improving the behaviors and social skills of their students.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students of the targeted third, fifth, and sixth grade classes exhibit poor social skills and academic achievement. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes: anecdotal records, teacher grades, conduct referrals to administration, parent conferences, and teacher observation.

Immediate Problem Context

Site A

Site A is a public school located in a large midwestern city. The school consists of 641 students who are enrolled in instructional programs from Pre-kindergarten through the eighth grade. The average class size for the designated grade levels include, Grade Kindergarten - 17.5, Grade 1 - 21.8, Grade 3 - 23.3, Grade 6 - 19.1, and Grade 8 - 23.5. The student body is 100% African American.

The staff consists of three administrators, 35 classroom teachers, one librarian, one physical education teacher, one art teacher, one counselor, three special education teachers, one instructional assistant, three resource teachers, five teacher assistants, two security officers, and one guidance counselor assistant (Site A School Improvement Plan, 1999).

Low-income students (from families receiving public funds) comprise 92.8% of the school population. All of the students are English speaking.

The attendance rate is 91.2%. The student mobility rate that is based on the number of students who enroll in or leave the school during the school year is 43.7%. There were no students absent from school without a valid cause for 18 or more days (Site A Report Card, 1999).

Site A is a two-structured building. The newer building houses kindergarten through fourth grade. The older building houses fifth through eighth grade. The newer building houses the library media center. The older building houses the gymnasium, cafeteria, and two computer labs.

The instructional programs from kindergarten through the sixth grade are self-contained. The seventh and eighth grades are departmentalized. The students have access to two computer labs. The subjects taught include: reading (language arts and spelling are incorporated with reading), math, social studies, and science. The students participate in physical education and library studies. The students have art once every two weeks.

There are three special education classrooms. One class is designated for the students in first through fourth grade; the other class is for students in fifth through eighth grade. The third classroom is designed so that the special education teacher can assist students who are mainstreamed out the classroom with their daily assignments.

There are several programs offered to the students at Site A. Lighthouse and Social Center after school programs assist students with their social and educational

development. Character education is taught to help assist students in building social skills.

The changes in the community deem it necessary for students to be aware of the negative activities that exist in the community. The Drug Awareness Resistance Education program (D.A.R.E) provides students with training to help them resist drugs, gangs, and violence.

The Surrounding Community

Site A is located in a mid to lower class community. There are four elementary schools located in the community. There is a park as well as a library within one mile of the school.

As of 1999, the number of households in the community totaled 18,161. Single-family housing units make up 52.6% of the community, and multifamily units total 47.4%. The number of homes sold in 1999 totaled 148 (US Census Bureau, 2000).

The median age in the community is 33.8 and the median family income is $47,789. According to the US Census, the total population of 59,100 is 54.1% female and 45.9 % male as cited in (Tribune.com, 2000) the race distribution in the community is 98.5% African American, 1.0% White, O.3% Hispanic, and O.2% other (U.S. Census Bureau). Single persons make up 39.2% of the community, married couples with spouses present is 32.6%, divorced is 10.9%, married couple with spouses absent is 9.1%, and widowed 8.3% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

The educational attainment for adults 18 years and older with less than a ninth grade education is 9.1%, 9^{th}-12^{th} grades education is 25.2%, high school graduates 29.1%. Community residents with some college experience represents 22.8%,

residents with an associate's degree is 5.7%, bachelor's degree 5.6%, and a master's degree is 2.4 % (U.S. Bureau, 2000).

The employment status of community residents 16 years of age and older total 54.3%, residents not in labor force is 35.3%, and unemployment is 0.4%.

Immediate Problem Context

Site B

Site B is a public school located on the western edge of a large midwestern city. The school consists of 496 students who are enrolled in instructional programs from kindergarten through eighth grade. The average class size for benchmark grade levels at Site B are Grade 1 - 24.0, Grade 3 - 30.0, Grade 6 - 17.5, and Grade 8 - 27.5. The school is integrated with a minority population of 36%, which includes 24.0% Mexican-American, 9.5% African-American, and 2.5% Asian.

The professional faculty for this school consists of 17 full-time certified teachers and four full-time certified special education teachers. The remainder of the professional faculty includes two full time special education resource teachers, a full time certified counselor, a part time psychologist, and a part-time social worker. A full time certified bilingual Polish teacher, a full-time librarian, and a full-time physical education teacher are also on staff. The administration team consists of a principal and an assistant principal. Sixteen full-time ancillary staff aides fill the remainder of the positions. Six of the staff aides are permanently assigned to the special education classes.

Low-income students (from families receiving public funds) comprise 55.2% of the school population. Students whose first language is not English and who are eligible for transitional bilingual education make up 10.7% of the student body. The school has 50 students in the Polish bilingual program.

The attendance rate is 93.6% (Site B Report Card, 1999). The student mobility rate that is based on the number of students who enroll in or leave the school during the school year is 16.9%. Students who are absent from school without a valid cause for 18 or more school days is 0.2%.

Site B houses grades kindergarten through eighth grade. The two-story building houses a cafeteria, gymnasium, library media center, and computer lab. There are two mobile education units located outside the building that house the learning resource center as well as a first grade class. The school is currently undergoing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) renovations that will make the facility wheelchair accessible.

The instructional programs from Kindergarten to Grade 6 have been self-contained, but this year (2000) the sixth grade classes will join the upper grade departmentalization rotation of English, math, science, social studies and reading. The students are exposed to a fully equipped computer lab and will soon interface with a new library media center.

There are three instructional special education programs at the school that service students. The school successfully mainstreams special education students into regular education classrooms. The students with cognitive disabilities are included in assemblies and field trips with regular education students when appropriate. The percentage of students with disabilities is 18.6%.

English as a Second Language Program (ESL) and an after school Lighthouse and Social Center are offered to the students to assist their educational and social development. Character education is taught in cooperation with a program entitled "Here's Looking at You" (a Safe and Drug Free Program).

Due to changes in the community, the students need to be aware of the dangers of drug abuse, violence, and the gang culture. School programs that address these issues include the Police Department Anti-Gang programs, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.), The McGruff Program for the primary grades and an after school program for stress management. The school currently employs a Drug Awareness program at various grade levels.

The Surrounding Community

The school is located in a well-kept, middle-class community. There are four other public elementary schools located in the same community, as well as a Catholic elementary school two blocks away. Two park district facilities are located within three blocks of the school campus and the community public library is located one mile away from the school campus.

As of 1999 the number of households in the community totaled 13,472. Single-family housing units make up 83.0% of the community and multifamily units total 17.0%. The number of homes sold in the community in 1999 was 326.

The median age in the community is 40.9 years and the median family income is $55,556. The total population of 37,134 (U.S. Census Bureau) is 52.8% female and 47.2% male. The race distribution in the community is 79.3% White, 12.5% African American, 7.1% Mexican American, and 1.2% other (U.S. Census Bureau). Married

couples with the spouse present comprise 52.2%, single individuals 28.2%, widowed 11.0%, divorced 5.6%, and married couples with the spouse absent 2.9% (U.S. Census Bureau).

The educational attainment for adults 18 years and older with less than a ninth grade education is 15.3%, 9^{th}-12^{th} grade education is 20.6%, and high school graduates total 35.6%. Community residents with some college represent 15.7% of the total community, those with an associate's degree 4.5%, a bachelor's degree 6.3%, and a graduate degree 2.1% (U.S. Census Bureau).

The employment status of community residents 16 years of age and older totals 55.1% employed, 4.3% unemployed, and 40.6% not in the labor force.

Immediate Problem Context

SITE C

Site C is a public school located in a large midwestern city. The school consists of 363 students who are enrolled in instructional programs from kindergarten through eighth grade. The average class sizes for benchmark grade levels at Site C are Kindergarten – 29.0, Grade 1 – 30.0, Grade 3 – 21.5, Grade 6 – 28.0, Grade 8 – 25.0. The population of the students consists of 100% African American. Low- income students (from families receiving public funds) comprise 85.4% of the school population.

The faculty at the school consists of 35. Of this number 25 are full-time classroom teachers. The rest of the full-time staff consists of the following: one principal, one assistant principal, two speech pathologists, one resource teacher, two social workers, one physical education teacher, one music teacher, and one cross-categorical

teacher (School Clerk, June 2000). The professional characteristics of the staff include on-going staff development and continuing education classes. Three of the full-time teachers have a master's degree, the rest of the staff have a bachelor's degree. The average years of experience of teaching in the school is 20 years.

The attendance rate is 95.2%. The student mobility rate, which is based on the number of students who enroll in or leave the school during the school year, is 17.0%. Students who are absent from school without a valid cause for 18 or more days is 0.6% (School Report Card, 1999).

The school is a one level school that is in the shape of the letter U. There are 25 classrooms located in the building and they adequately hold approximately 30 students comfortably. The school recently acquired air conditioners for all of the classrooms and the resource rooms. The school has a gymnasium and a multi-purpose room, which is used mostly as the cafeteria. The school on the inside is very neat, orderly, clean, and student centered.

The standard curriculum includes the core subjects: mathematics, language arts, reading, science, and social studies. The school day consists of eight 40-minute periods devoting time to each of the core subjects. The students' school day may also consist of an enrichment course. The enrichment courses are: computer, art, foreign language, music, drama, and dance.

The instructional programs from Kindergarten to Grade 6 have been self-contained, but last year (1999) the sixth grade class joined the upper grade reading, math, and science department. The students are exposed to a fully equipped computer lab and library media center.

There are three instructional special education programs at the school that service students. The school successfully mainstreams students who are in special education classes. The students who are cognitively challenged are included in assemblies, extra-curricular activities, and field trips with the regular education students. The percentage of students who are cognitively challenged is 24.3%.

Lighthouse, social center, and speech are offered to the students to assist with their educational and social development. Character education is also integrated with the general curriculum.

Due to changes in the community, the students need to be aware of the dangers of drug abuse, violence, and gang crime. School programs that address these issues include local Police Department Anti- Gang programs, Drug Awareness and Resistance in Education (D.A.R.E.), The McGruff Program for the primary students, and an after school program for stress management among teens. The school also has parents come in to talk and mentor students about these issues.

The Surrounding Community

Site C is located in a well-kept, middle class community. There are a total of 16 public elementary schools located in this community. Three park district facilities are located within four blocks of the school campus and the community library is located four blocks away from the school setting.

As of 1999 the number of households in the community totaled 10,174. Single-family housing units make up 77.6% of the community, and the multi-family units totaled 22.4%. The number of homes sold in the community in 1999 was 126. The median age in the community is 34.5. The median income is $34,032 (US Census Bureau, 1990).

The total population is 32,114 (US Census Bureau, 1990) of this total 54.8% are female and 45.2% are male. The race distribution in the community is 98.5% African American, 1.0% White, 0.3% Hispanic, and 0.2% other (US Census Bureau, 1990). Married couples with a spouse present comprise 38.1%, never married 36.8%, divorced 10.9%, widowed 7.7%, and married couples with a spouse absent comprise 6.4% (US Census Bureau, 1990).

The educational attainment for adults 18 years and over with less than a ninth grade education is 8%, 9-12th grade education is 20.5%, and high school graduates total 26.6%. Community residents with some college represent 24.8% of the total community, those with an associate degree 7.6%, a bachelor's degree 8.4% and a master's degree 4.1% (US Census Bureau, 1990).

The employment status of community residents 16 years of age and older total 57.1%, 33.8% not in the labor force, and 9.1% are unemployed.

Immediate Problem Context

SITE D

Site D is a public school located in a near-south suburb of a large midwestern city. The school consists of 544 students who are enrolled in instructional programs from preschool through eighth grade. The average class size for benchmark grade levels are Kindergarten - 23.0, Grade 1 - 21.0, Grade 3 -22.3, Grade 6 - 27.5. The school's racial/ethnic background consists of 91.0% White, 6.1% Hispanic, 2.9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.0% Black and 0.0% Native Americans.

The professional staff of this elementary school numbers approximately 47. Classroom teachers account for 20 of these positions. The rest of the full-time

certified staff is as follows: one principal, one assistant principal, and one speech pathologist, two cross-categorical resource (CCR) teachers, a resource teacher, one learning resource center (LRC) teacher, one reading teacher, one social worker, and one physical education (PE) teacher, and one transitional program of instruction (TPI) teacher. The part-time certified staff includes a music teacher, a band teacher, a kindergarten teacher, a speech pathologist, and a gifted teacher, a nurse, and a resource teacher. The rest of the positions are filled by approximately nine aides.

Low-income students (from families receiving public aid) comprise 11.2% of the school population. Students whose first language is not English and who are eligible for transitional bilingual education makes up 5.0% of the student body.

The attendance rate is 94.9%. The student mobility rate that is based on the number of students who enroll in or leave a school during the school year is 10.6%. There were no students who were absent from school without a valid cause for 18 or more school days.

Site D is one of four elementary schools and one middle school in the district. The standard curriculum includes the core subjects: mathematics, English, reading, social studies and science. In addition to the core subject areas, students receive five 25-minute periods of physical education, one 25-minute period of music, and one 25-minute period of LRC instruction. Students are heterogeneously assigned to a classroom. The students in the CCR classrooms are mainstreamed for music, LRC, PE and other academic classes as indicated on their individual education plan (IEP).

The Drug Awareness Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program is a school program involving fifth grade students and the local police department. D.A.R.E. addresses the dangers of drug abuse, violence, and the gang culture. Student council and intramural sports (IMS) are additional programs offered to the students at Site D to assist with their educational and social development.

The Surrounding Community

The school is located in a near-south suburb of a large midwestern city with a population of 57,980 (Tribune.com). The community is characterized as offering all the advantages and opportunities of a big city while maintaining a small town atmosphere. There are 18 elementary schools, two junior high schools, two public high schools, four trade and technical schools, and 20 universities (within 20 miles) located in the same community. A public library, park district, sports, and exercise facility are each located within 2 miles of the school campus. The community hospital is located within 3 miles of the school campus. As of 1999 the number of households in the community totaled 21,835. Single-family housing units make up 81.9% of the community and multifamily units total 18.1%. The number of homes sold in the community in 1999 was 796, the median age in the community is 40.9 years and the median family income is $69,888. The total population of 57,980 (U.S. Census Bureau) is 53.3% female, and 46.7% male (Tribune.com). The racial distribution in the community is 96.5% White, 2.2% Hispanic, 1.2% other and 0.1% Black (U.S. Census Bureau). Married couples with the spouse present comprise 55.5%, never married 25.3%, widowed 11.3%, divorced 5.8% and married couples with the spouse absent 2.0% (U.S. Census Bureau).

The educational attainment for adults 18 years and older with less that a ninth grade education is 7.6%, 9^{th}-12^{th} grade education is 12.4%, and high school graduates total 36.0%. Community residents with some college represent 21.6% of the total community, those with an associate's degree 4.8%, a bachelor's 12.4% and a master's degree 5.2% (U.S. Census Bureau).

The employment status of community residents 16 years of age and older totals 60.2% employed, 37.4% not in the labor force, and 2.4% unemployed.

National Context of the Problem

Elementary educators have traditionally given high priority to enhance academic and social development among their students. Achievement and inadequate social skills mirror our ever-changing society. The long range reasons for taking time to focus on cooperative social skills have to do with the paradigm shift our society is experiencing with more intensity each year. That shift has the world moving from a highly individualistic "me- first" social structure to a "we-sink-or swim together" structure. Many believe that a student's social skills rather than Intelligent Quotient Scores (IQ) and classroom grades are a better predictor to future student success (Bellanca, 1992).

Social skills, like other skills, must be learned. However, once learned, the abilities to cooperate and work effectively with others will serve students well in school and later on in their careers (Johnson & Johnson, 1990).

Due to recent pressure placed on teachers to prepare students for standardized tests, less focus is being put on teaching social skills. Students are experiencing great difficulty socializing with their peers because they are lacking the necessary social skills for survival. Emphasis in schools suggests that " we care more about how well school

children can read and write than whether they'll be alive next week" (Bellanca, 1992). As a result, students are engaging in more inappropriate behaviors than in the past. The rate of behavior referrals and school suspension has increased drastically over the years (Goleman, 1995).

In 1990, compared to the previous two decades, the United States saw the highest juvenile arrest rate for violent crimes ever; teen arrests for forcible rape had doubled; teen murder rates quadrupled, mostly due to an increase in shootings. During those same two decades, the suicide rate for teenagers tripled, as did the number of children under fourteen who were murder victims (Goleman, 1995).

During the last two decades a convincing body of evidence has accumulated to indicate that unless children achieve minimal social competence by about the age of 6 years, they have a high probability of being at risk throughout life (McClellan & Katy, 1993).

A school community may be created to enhance the positive development of children and youth, prevent disruption to healthy development, and restore order after a disruption has taken place (Johnson & Johnson, 1998). As students increase their capabilities to relate constructively with peers from more diverse cultural and socio-economic groups, academic achievement, school-likings and self-esteem will improve (Fogarty & Bellanca, 1992).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to document the lack of social skills, student surveys, teacher checklists, and discipline referral forms were recorded. Additionally, the teacher researchers kept anecdotal records. The teacher researchers recorded the students' responses to the surveys that can be found in Table 1 and Table 2. The targeted population consisted of third, fifth, and sixth grade students. The surveys were administered in February 2001. The results from the surveys and anecdotal records reinforced the teacher researchers observation regarding students' lack of social skills in the classroom. Of the 101 students in the four classes, 101 were involved in the survey process.

The teacher researchers created the student survey in order to document the problem of students not taking adequate responsibility for their own behavior. The teacher researchers recorded the students responses to the survey are in Tables 1-3. The targeted population consists of third, fifth and sixth grade students. The surveys were administered in February and May of 2001. The results from the survey reinforced the teacher researchers observations regarding students' lack of social skills.

Table 1

Summary of Student Survey

Question	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Excessive talking	39%	22%	37%	3%
Interrupts class	18%	22%	48%	13%
Physical contact	22%	16%	41%	22%
Ridiculing classmates	27%	26%	38%	10%

Table 1 shows the results of a student survey. In the student survey 101 students were asked if they thought their classmates talked too much during class time. More than half of the students responded that their peers always and usually talked too much during class. These results led the teacher researchers to believe that students have difficulty with their excessive talking at school.

Of the 101 students who were surveyed only 18% believed that the students always interrupted class. This number shows that some of the students are knowledgeable about students taking away from class time with inappropriate behaviors. Table 1 shows behaviors that are negative in a classroom setting. It also shows how the students at the four sites viewed the behaviors of their classmates. According to the survey, the students are aware of the fact that their classmates display behaviors that are inappropriate. For example, excessive talking, interrupting class, using physical contact and ridiculing classmates are inappropriate behaviors. When discussing with the classes the results of the survey, students were shocked to know that their classmates in some instances felt the same way they did. The teacher

researchers think that they might also need to direct the students on how to act appropriately in given situations.

Table 2

Summary of Student Survey

Question	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Inappropriate behavior(classmates)	21%	23%	38%	10%
Inappropriate behavior(students)	9%	9%	43%	40%

Table 2 shows that students appear confused concerning their understanding of what is appropriate behavior for the individual and what is appropriate behavior for others. The teacher researchers noticed from the survey that a majority of students do not feel they display inappropriate behavior, however, they believe that their classmates display inappropriate behavior. When asked did they display inappropriate behavior about one-tenth responded that they always display inappropriate behavior. However, a little less than half responded that they never display inappropriate behavior. This suggests that the students in the class believe that others and not themselves cause most of the inappropriate behaviors. The teacher researchers might also want to have students create a self-portrait to look at himself or herself. This would evaluate where they fall in a survey that asks questions about their specific social behaviors.

Table 3

Summary of Student Survey

Question	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Appropriate language	20%	27%	41%	13%
Follows directions	12%	37%	33%	19%

Table 3 shows that one-fifth of the students thought that the indicated class displayed appropriate language. A little more than one tenth of the students felt like they always followed directions in the classroom. These results show inconsistency with the negative behaviors because they responded in an opposite manner when asked about negative behaviors in the classroom. The teacher researchers might also want to look at integrating direct instruction of social skills.

The teacher researchers created a student checklist to monitor student behaviors. The reader will note that there were four categories of behaviors being observed. The first category was inappropriate language. The second category was disrespectful behavior. The third category was following directions, and the fourth category was inappropriate physical contact.

The teacher researcher observed students over the course of a two-week period. There were a total of 342 incidences. There were 94 incidences of inappropriate language, 68 incidences of disrespectful behavior, 152 incidences of not following directions, and 28 incidences of inappropriate physical contact. Figure 1 shows the percent of incidences for each category.

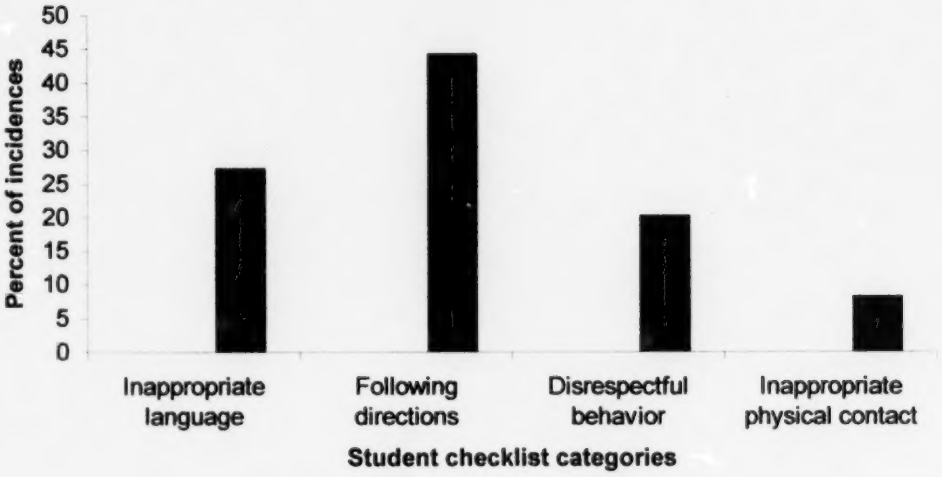

Figure 1. Percent of incidences for each category on student checklist from Site A.

An analysis of the data suggests the greatest number of incidences fell under the following directions category. There are a variety of reasons that might explain the number of incidences where students were not able to follow directions. The teachers' directions could have been confusing or unclear to the students. The students may have been distracted or engaged in off-task behavior. The second and third highest categories were the use of inappropriate language and disrespectful behavior. The use of inappropriate language and disrespectful behavior could very well be due to a lack of social skills. The teacher can help students in this area by modeling and allowing students to role-play using a better choice of words as a class so that it becomes a learning experience. The lowest number of incidences fell under inappropriate physical contact. Emphasis is put on keeping hands and feet to themselves during school. The students know that there are severe consequences for touching their classmates in

inappropriate ways. This could be the reason for the low number of incidences in this category.

The teacher researcher recorded the number of incidences of students' misconduct. There are three ranges of misconduct: mild, moderate and severe. The mild category includes incidences where students did not wear their uniforms. The moderate category consists of incidences where students would leave the classroom without permission or when students talk back to an authority figure. The severe category consists of incidences where students would threaten or hit another student. The teacher researcher recorded the data over the course of a two-week period. There were a total of 13 discipline referrals. Figure 2 shows the percent of discipline referrals for each category.

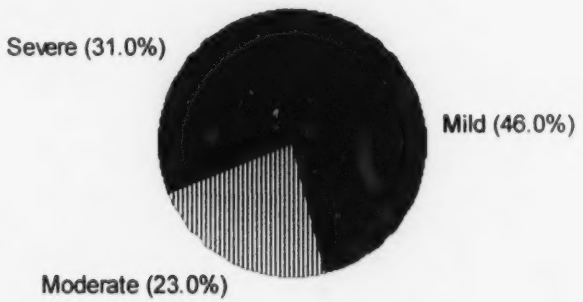

Figure 2. Percent of discipline referrals for each category from Site A.

The data suggests that the largest number of discipline referrals fell in the mild category. Almost half of the referrals in the mild category were written for students who did not wear their uniform or wore braids in their hair. The severe category was the second highest. The severe category was comprised of students who threatened or hit someone.

Instead of telling an adult many students decided to take matters in their own hands. After students are engaged in cooperative learning activities the numbers in this category will, it is hoped, decrease. Role-playing and engaging students in cooperative learning activities might help students decrease all levels of inappropriate behaviors.

The teacher researcher at Site B created a checklist to monitor the behavior of the students in the targeted class over a two-week period. The total number of incidences was 295. There were 60 incidences of inappropriate language, 67 incidences of disrespectful behavior, 122 incidences of not following directions, and 46 incidences of inappropriate physical contact. Figure 3 shows the percent of incidences in each category.

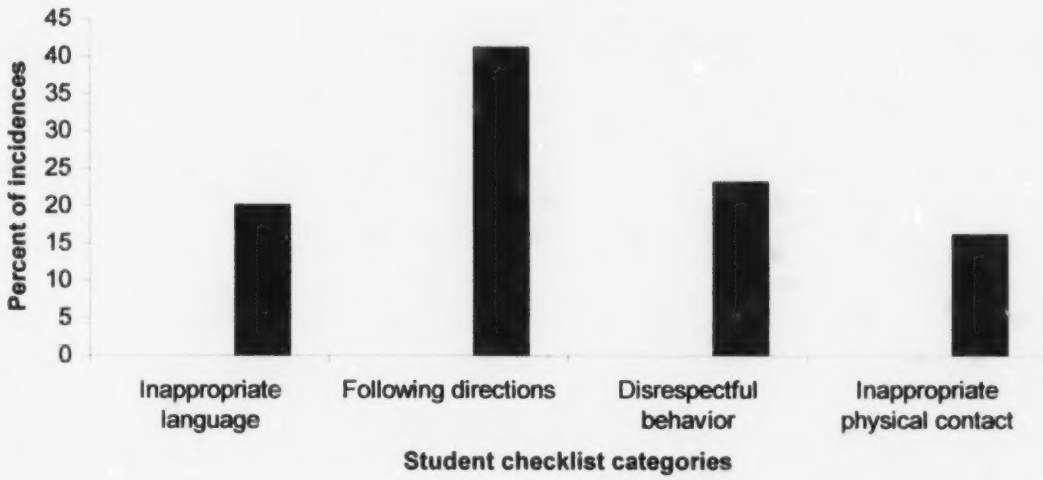

Figure 3. Percent of incidences for each category on student checklist from Site B

The data suggest that the inability to follow directions was the most notable social skill deficit. This would indicate a need for improvement in listening skills with the targeted class. Further analysis would suggest a frustration level among the students

that manifested itself through the use of inappropriate language. This data would indicate a need to improve the interpersonal social skills among students in the targeted class. Additionally, the teacher researcher also noticed an increase in name-calling as well as students interfering with the on task behavior of other students. The data suggests that the students' social difficulties are manifested primarily verbally and not physically. The lowest number of incidences was in the category of inappropriate physical contact. The students are aware of the classroom consequences for fighting and inappropriate physical contact at Site B that may account for the low numbers in this category.

The teacher researcher at Site B collected the number of discipline referrals where students in the targeted class were "written up" for misconduct. The data was collected over a two-week period. The data was collated into three categories that included mild, moderate and severe discipline referrals. There was a total of 26 discipline referrals. Figure 4 shows the percent of incidences in each category.

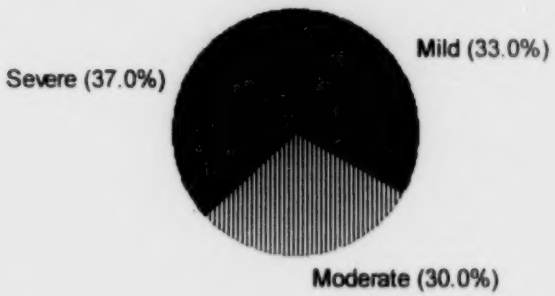

Figure 4. Percent of discipline referrals for each category from Site B.

An analysis of the discipline referral data indicates a near equal relationship between mild and moderate cases. The largest percent fell into the severe category that included fighting and play fighting, indicating a lack of previous social skill instruction. The incidences of fighting that occurred did not occur in the targeted classroom, but with targeted students who were in other classrooms at the time the referrals were issued. The majority of mild discipline referrals corresponded to the inability of the targeted students to successfully interact with their teachers and classmates. This data indicates a need for social skill development that incorporates an interpersonal focus. The mild discipline referrals involved off-task classroom behavior that would indicate a need to pursue cooperative learning activities that utilize the students' primary learning and communication strengths.

The teacher researcher at Site C created a student checklist to observe the behavior of students. The reader will note that there were four categories of behaviors being observed. The first category was inappropriate language. The second category was disrespectful behavior. The third category was following directions, and the fourth category was inappropriate physical contact. The teacher researcher observed students for 10 days during a 40-minute class period. There were a total of 487 incidences. There were 159 incidences of inappropriate language, 162 incidences of disrespectful behavior, 137 incidences for not following directions, and 29 incidences of inappropriate physical contact. Figure 5 shows the number percent of incidences for each category.

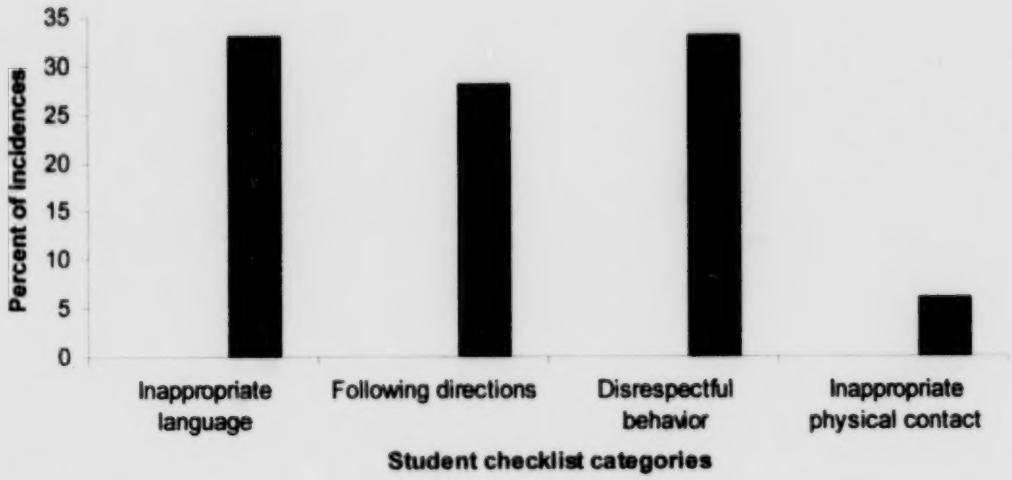

Figure 5. Percent of incidences for each category on student checklist from Site C.

The data suggest the greatest number of incidences fell into two categories: inappropriate language and disrespectful behavior. There are several reasons that might explain why students used inappropriate language and disrespectful behavior. For example, lack of social skills, impulsivity, lack of parental modeling, and lack of behavior management.

The next category was the use of following directions. This could be due to a lack of the teacher using close proximity with the students and making sure that all the students understood the directions. The last category was the use of inappropriate physical contact. The school places a great emphasis on keeping students in line with themselves, so that they do not touch other students. The students are aware of the consequences that come with touching other students.

The teacher researcher at Site C recorded the number of incidences where students were given a discipline referral for misbehavior. There were three categories of misconduct. The categories were mild, moderate, and severe. The mild category

consisted on incidences where the students used excessive talking. The moderate category consisted of incidences where students were using excessive talking, getting out of their seat, and refusing requests to redirect their behavior by the teacher. The severe category consisted of incidences where the students were using either physical contact or fighting. There were a total of 14 discipline referrals given to students. Figure 6 shows the percent of discipline referrals for each category.

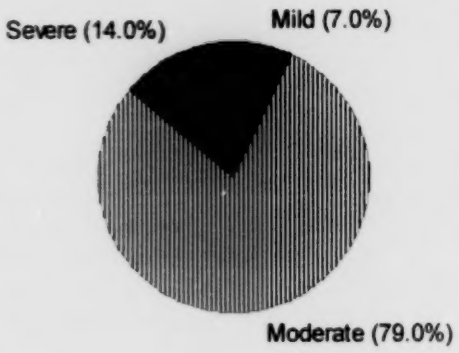

Figure 6. Percent of discipline referrals for each category from Site C.

An analysis of the data suggest that the largest number of discipline referrals fell into the moderate category. Over half of the discipline forms were written for students who were getting out of their seats, talking, and ignoring requests given by the teacher. This could be linked to the fact that 28% of the students lack the ability to follow directions. The severe category was the second highest. In this category the students either used physical contact with other students or threatened the use of physical contact. Most times the students decided to handle situations themselves rather than telling the teacher.

The teacher researcher at Site D created a student checklist to monitor the behavior of students. The reader will note that there were four categories of behaviors being observed. The first category was inappropriate language. The second category was disrespectful behavior. The third category was following directions and the fourth category was inappropriate physical contact.

The teacher researcher observed students for 25 minutes daily over the course of a two-week period. There were a total of 277 incidences. There were 27 incidences of inappropriate language, 112 incidences of disrespectful behavior, 122 incidences of not following directions, and 16 incidences of inappropriate physical contact. Figure 7 shows the number for each category.

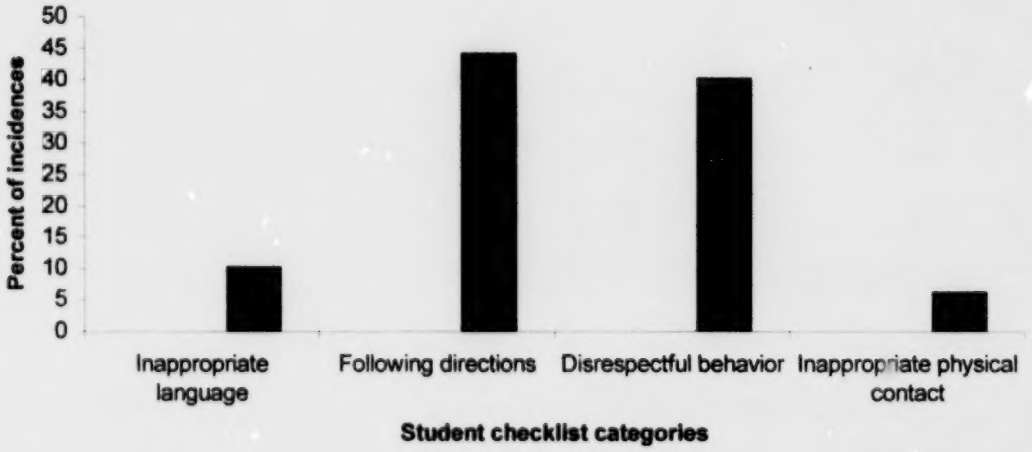

Figure 7. Percent of incidences for each category on student checklist from Site D.

An analysis of the data suggests the greatest number of incidences fell under the following directions category. There are a variety of reasons that might explain the number of incidences where students were not able to follow directions. The teacher's directions could have been confusing or unclear to the students. The students may

have been distracted or engaged in off-task behaviors. The second and third categories were disrespectful behavior and inappropriate language. The teacher can help students in this area by modeling and allowing students to role-play using a better choice of words as a class so that it becomes a learning experience. The lowest number of incidences fell under inappropriate physical contact. There is a great emphasis put on keeping hands, feet, and objects to themselves in school. The students know that there are consequences for touching their classmates in inappropriate ways. This could be the reason for the low number of incidences in this category.

The teacher researcher recorded the number of incidences of student misconduct. The three ranges of misconduct include mild, moderate, and severe. The mild category would be incidences where students were talking out of turn. The moderate category would consist of incidences where students would argue or talk back to an authority figure. The severe category would consist of incidences where students would threaten or hit another student. The teacher researcher collected this data from colleagues at Site D over the course of a 2-week period. There were a total of 10 discipline referrals written. Figure 8 shows the percent of discipline referrals for each category.

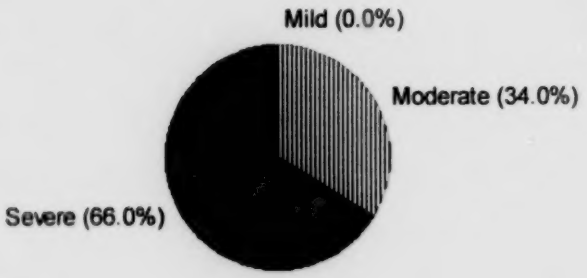

Figure 8. Percent of discipline referrals for each category from Site D.

An analysis of the data suggest that the largest number of discipline referrals fell into the severe category. Over two-thirds of the referrals fell into the severe category that included verbal and physical threats indicating a lack of previous social skill instruction.

The moderate category was the second highest. It included disrespectful and inappropriate manners, which suggest the inability of targeted students to successfully interact with their teachers and classmates. In the mild category there were no incidences reported. Minor classroom disruptions such as talking out of turn were handled in class as they occurred with no further disciplinary action taken.

Probable Causes

Several possible reasons contribute to the problem of students' lacking social skills. Analysis of the probable cause literature indicates that the problem could be related to poor climate, lack of direct teaching of social skills, and lack of positive peer relationships.

Poor climate can contribute to poor social conduct. A class that lacks structure and organization jeopardizes learning and appropriate behavior (Rea, 2000). The

developing needs of middle level learners for more personal power, individual freedom, peer acceptance, and active fun can threaten a teacher's need for classroom control. Without understanding, effort, and personal development the students' feel that the teachers do not care, do not trust them, and do not respect them (Black 1997). When students do not satisfy their basic needs, they seem to be more prone to frustration and failure in school. This also causes them to have low self-esteem, which can have a negative impact on learning. If students do not experience fun in the classroom, they will likely become bored and seek fun in off task- behavior. Intellectual benefits such as generative thinking, risk taking, autonomy, and mental engagement are essential to the development of young adolescent minds. As students become more empowered, they become more independent, more assertive, and more challenged. The surroundings in which one is placed in plays a major part in how one acts. According to Berman (1998), without a sense of community and family, many young people lose the connectedness that fosters sensitivities, motivations, and skills. Social understanding and social responsibility build on a child's desire to understand and feel effective in the social world. One's sense of self, one's morality, and one's sense of connectedness to others stimulate prosocial behavior. One might conclude that a school with a poor climate harbors students who are not interested in education, teachers who will not cooperate with the administration, and a principal who is out of touch with teacher and student needs. Without a climate that creates a harmonious and well functioning school, a high degree of academic achievement is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve (Frieberg, 1998).

Additionally, the lack of direct teaching of social skills is a contributing factor to poor conduct among students. Students lack social skills and they are not directly taught these skills so that they can perform a given behavior. This causes a problem for teachers because teachers teach math, reading, science, and social studies. However, teachers tend not to teach social skills. As a result of the lack of direct instruction students often get punished or reprimanded for not displaying certain behaviors or reactions. Through observation, the teacher researchers have found that the students do lack instruction in the social skill area. In the past, teacher researchers did not directly teach social skills to students. The students sometimes know what they did wrong, but they have no clue as to how to fix it (Smith, 1995).

Peer relations can influence social competency. Making friends is one of the most important aspects in a child's social life and when that need is not being met it can hinder a child socially. Rejected children were found to be at risk for academic problems rather than non-rejected peers (Parke, 1998). The children should be allowed to share and to utilize all of their resources. Social opportunities should be provided for the students. It is important for the teacher to be a good model, teach social skills in the classroom, encourage collaboration and establish small group projects. It is also important to remember that for some children social skills may need encouragement and may develop slowly.

The teachers at all four sites have observed the aforementioned probable causes. The lack of social skills is crucial at all four sites. Most of the students display constant use of inappropriate language. For example, swearing, saying "shut up" and using an inappropriate tone of voice. Lack of respectful behavior is another

demonstration of lack of social competency at the four sites. Most students display on-going use of teasing, name-calling, interrupting, and putting their hands up when someone else is speaking. Another cause is the lack of ability to follow directions. This causes the students not to listen and constantly stay off task during school time. The last cause is the use of inappropriate physical contact. This problem creates violence in the classroom. The students push, shove, and hit one another. All of these problems are evident at all four sites.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Research indicates several possible solution strategies that teachers put in place in order to help students become successful socially. Teachers are implementing plans to improve students' social skills in the area of school climate, peer relations, discipline and management, and cooperative learning.

The first solution is cooperative learning. According to Johnson and Johnson, Kagan, and Slavin, there is a strong positive relationship between the ability to think, and to think more creatively when in-group settings. Cooperative learning also enhances academic and social skills (Bellanca & Fogarty, 1992).

The social skills attained through cooperative learning include: communication and listening skills (verbal and non-verbal communication skills and listening), leadership (problem solving, decision making, and the acceptance and support of others) trust building (maintain working relationships and enhance teamwork), and conflict resolution (seeking resolutions by reaching a consensus with other group members). These skills are essential to success in today's society. When a student masters these skills it will transfer into their everyday life, and in turn make them successful (Slavin, 1983).

One of the most important psychological outcomes of cooperative learning methods is their effect on student self-esteem. Academic success has been found to have positive social consequences for students involved in cooperative teams and competitive games. Cooperative learning methods tend to increase student's actual success; and individuals who experience success are more likely than those who do not to believe that their efforts made a difference. Because cooperative learning methods are social interventions, they should produce social effects (Slavin, 1983).

Cooperative learning increases contact between students and engages them in pleasant activities together thus increasing a positive affect between students. Cooperative learning may produce positive changes in the kids of prosocial behaviors that are increasingly needed in a society where the need to get along with others is more and more crucial (Lickona, 1991). Cooperative learning is not a new idea. Throughout history the ability to work together has been a major factor to the survival of humankind. Individuals who can organize and coordinate their efforts to achieve a common purpose have been most successful in virtually any human endeavor (D. Johnson, R. Johnson, & E. Johnson Holubec).

Currently society is in an era of competitive and individualistic learning and entering an era of interdependence and mutuality in schools. The current trend is for "we" classrooms and "we are all in this together" learning. There are many forms of interaction in the classroom, but the interaction that most influence students' performance in instructional situations is student-to-student interaction (D. Johnson, R. Johnson, & E. Johnson Holubec).

Cooperative learning is a basic instructional strategy that can be implemented in every grade level and subject area. Lessons may be structured competitively so that students work against each other to achieve a goal that only one or a few students can achieve. Lessons can also be structured individualistically meaning students work by themselves to accomplish learning goals unrelated to those of classmates. A third option is to structure lessons cooperatively so that students work together to accomplish shared goals. An essential instructional skill that all teachers need is knowing how and when to structure students' learning goals cooperatively, competitively, and individualistically. Each has its own place in the ideal classroom when used appropriately.

There is more to cooperation than grouping the students at one table and having one student do all of the work. The basic elements of cooperative learning include positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, interpersonal and small group skills, and processing (D. Johnson, R. Johnson, & E Johnson Holubec).

There are five different but interrelated approaches to cooperative learning that are useful if used appropriately. The first approach involves specific cooperative activities that teachers may implement in their classrooms. These include group-building activities such as "favorite sports and hobbies". The second approach involves giving teachers specific lessons structured cooperatively. The third approach trains educators in how to use a curriculum package designed to highlight the implementation of cooperative learning, such as Teams Games Tournaments, Student Team Achievement Divisions, and Team Assisted Instructions. The fourth approach trains

teachers to develop their own activities and lessons by applying specific strategies into their teaching. Some of these strategies include the jigsaw method or having students work together to complete a group project. The fifth approach involves training teachers in how to use cooperative learning in the conceptual approach. The conceptual approach means the lesson is based in a theoretical framework (D. Johnson, R. Johnson, & E. Johnson Holubec).

Numerous cooperative learning activities may be generated from one strategy. Developing expertise in cooperative learning is a long-term process that requires up to two years or more of hard work. To be an expert you have to use it long enough to be able to take any lesson in any subject and structure it cooperatively; use cooperative learning at a routine-use level; and use cooperative learning at least 60 percent of the time (D. Johnson, R. Johnson, & E. Johnson Holubec).

According to scholar and teacher, Harry Wong, cooperative learning is not so much learning to cooperate as it is cooperating to learn. All the recent research indicates that cooperative learning leads to higher achievement for all students. No research states otherwise (Wong).

Wong suggests structuring lessons for cooperative learning in the following way:

- Specify the group name.
- Specify the size of the group.
- State the purpose, materials, and steps of the activity.
- Teach the procedures.
- Specify and teach the cooperative skills needed.
- Hold the individuals accountable for the work of the group.

- Teach ways for the students to evaluate how successfully they have worked together (Wong).

Cooperative learning refers to a set of instructional techniques in which students work in small, mixed-ability learning groups. The message to your students is to compete only against yourself, strive each day to be the best person you can be, and be responsible for your learning as well as the learning of your group mates (Wong). Integrating management tactics, social skill instruction, and collaborative problem solving into the daily curriculum create another strategy that fosters learning with multiple intelligences and cooperative learning. Management tactics must begin at the start of the school year. It is the teachers task to teach the students how to form cooperative groups and to take the time necessary to introduce each management tactic and to guide students in the practice in the tactic's use (Chapman).

Next, the cooperative guidelines of expected behavior need to be posted. A primary school example may include:

- Use low voices.
- Listen to your neighbor.
- Stay with your group.
- Don't hurt the feelings of others.

Cooperative social skill instruction must then be integrated into each lesson. Essential interpersonal skills include attentive listening, teamwork, encouragement, and praising accomplishments. Collaborative problem solving, instructional variety, center, and reviewing cooperation and positive interaction are all elements in creating a cooperative learning environment (Chapman).

The second solution is enhancing school climate. A healthy school environment enhances student outcomes, promotes good morale and ensures positive learning and working conditions. A positive school atmosphere fosters academic achievement as well as favorable student and staff attitudes. A beneficial school climate provides the basis for parents, teachers and students to work cooperatively and effectively. Positive school climate is a statement of educational leadership that does not occur naturally. The first steps in any effort toward school improvement are to develop and maintain the proper climate for change. These first steps must be non-threatening. Everyone in the organization must feel needed and believe that their opinions and ideas are valued. Improved school climate occurs when teachers exchange ideas and materials with each other, and individual teachers visit, talk and plan together for classroom improvements. With these improvements students will feel more relaxed and successful. The students will be allowed to give their input on their classroom arrangement and their learning. This will allow students to feel self-worth and realize that they are a very important link in the classroom. To promote civility and nurture character in young people requires that we reconnect them with their communities and help them appreciate others and show them that they can make a difference. The most productive instructional strategy for developing social responsibility is to teach young people skills in empathy.

The third solution is enhancing discipline and management in school. Many educational values stress the importance of working cooperatively and promoting social skills through training and discipline. Providing students with skills for getting along and working with others requires general educators to integrate social skills training into existing curriculum. To improve this area teachers will create and improve prosocial

interactions, success, feelings of acceptance, and build self-esteem. In order to improve student's ability to work together the teachers from all four sites are using cooperative learning techniques. The students are building basic life skills, and they constantly practice cooperative learning, which will indeed show improvement in interpersonal skills. The students will use their learning and transfer it into their daily program. Students should learn to recognize inappropriate social behavior. Students should apply cooperative learning techniques and become very successful.

According to Nelson (1996) positive discipline is an approach that does not include excessive control or permissiveness, and is effective in teaching children self-discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and problem–solving skills.

Excessive control usually involves punishment that is humiliating to children. Nelson (1996) believes it is important to emphasize that eliminating punishment does not mean that children should be allowed to do what they want. We need to provide opportunities for children to experience responsibility in direct relationship to the privileges they enjoy.

Classroom discipline is not just a problem; it is also a moral education opportunity. Lickona (1991) observes that discipline provides the moral code that makes it possible for the small society of the classroom to function.

According to Lickona (1991) moral discipline has the long-range goal of helping young people to behave responsibly in any situation, not just when they're under the control of a particular adult. Moral discipline seeks to develop students' reasoned respect for rules, the rights of others, and the teacher's legitimate authority and students' sense of responsibility to the moral community of the classroom.

Teachers who practice moral discipline do four things:

- They project a clear sense of their moral authority – their rights and duty to teach students respect and responsibility and to hold them accountable to those standards of behavior.
- They approach discipline, including rule setting, as part of a larger, ongoing effort to develop a good moral community in the classroom.
- They establish and enforce consequences in an educational way - one that helps students appreciate a rule's purpose, make amends for wrongdoing, and take responsibility for improving their behavior.
- To convey caring and respect for the individual student by trying to find the cause of a discipline problem and a solution that helps that student become successful, responsible member of the classroom community.

Jones (1981) focuses on an approach to managing a classroom, which involves implementing interesting, individualized instruction and employing an interactive and problem-solving approach to classroom discipline. This approach has the advantage of creating a positive, supportive environment, which facilitates learning and personal growth simultaneously.

Nelson (1993) believes that although there are many methods for teachers and students to work together in a climate of mutual respect, the class meeting provides the greatest potential for teaching children empowering life skills in the least amount of time. Together, students and teachers can create a classroom climate that is nurturing to both self-esteem and academic performance. For this reason the classroom meeting can be a basis for achieving positive discipline in the classroom.

A well-run class meeting involves students in their education, teaches them to think for themselves, and eliminates most problems with acting out students. Those who experience belonging and significance through participation in class meetings seldom need to misbehave. When they do misbehave, students can learn to help each other, usually with more effective results than when they are referred to sources outside the classroom.

According to Nelson (1993) when classroom teachers learn to implement effective class meetings, most problems can be successfully handled through the class meeting process instead of being referred to other sources. Students are taught a fundamental concept: "There are enough of us here to help each other; we don't need to pass the buck." With training, students seem more willing to listen to each other than to adults. Class meeting provide a supportive atmosphere for students to become actively involved in determining their needs and implementing strategies they design to benefit everyone concerned. They can come up with wonderfully creative solutions when given the opportunity.

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of the cooperative learning technique during the period from February 2001 to May 2001, the third, fifth, and sixth grade students from the regular targeted classes will increase their social skills as measured by the student surveys, checklist, and conduct referrals.

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following strategies are necessary:

1. Introduce cooperative learning strategies to develop student understanding of expected behaviors.
2. Students will participate in a variety of interpersonal social skill lessons and activities.
3. Students will participate in numerous cooperative learning activities that will increase their social skill interactions.

Action Plan

Pre- Interventions - Week One/Two

The teacher will begin by distributing a parent consent letter to each student in the targeted classes. The teacher will also distribute a student survey to the classes in February, March, and May. The teacher will introduce cooperative learning strategies three times a week from February through May. These lessons will incorporate improvement of effective use of social skills, appropriate language, reduce disrespectful behaviors, avoiding physical contact, and following directions. These skills will be used in conjunction with the student checklist. The students will participate in numerous cooperative learning activities. The teachers will teach and reinforce social skills through cooperative learning.

Week Three/Four

The teachers will begin forming. To explain, the teachers will organize groups and establish behavior guidelines. The teachers will be focusing on the use of 6" voices, listening to their neighbor, staying with the group, doing their job, and helping each other. These skills will help the students to develop communication, trust, leadership,

and conflict resolution.

Week Five/Six

The teachers will begin norming. To explain, the teachers will have students complete assigned tasks and build effective relationships. The teachers will help the students to focus on including all group members, encouraging others, listening with focus, letting every member participate, respecting each other's opinions, and staying on task. These skills will also build on helping the students to develop effective social skills.

Week Seven/Eight

The teachers will begin conforming. For instance, the teachers will have students begin to clarify, paraphrase ideas, give examples, probe students for differences, generate alternatives, and seek consensus.

Week Nine/Ten

The teachers will begin storming. To describe, the teachers will help students with functioning effectively and enabling the students to work as a team. The students will be implementing the appropriate voice tones, disagreeing with an idea not the person, keeping an open mind, seeking all points of view, generating alternatives, and seeking consensus.

Week Eleven/Twelve

The teachers will begin introduction of performing. To explain, the teacher will help to foster higher-level thinking skills, creativity and depth intuition. The students will elaborate on ideas, integrate ideas, justify ideas, extend ideas, synthesize, and reach consensus. The lessons will help the students to enhance

their communication with each other.

Week Thirteen/Fourteen

The teachers will begin transfer. To describe, the teachers will help students to apply skills learned across the curriculum and transfer into life beyond the classroom.

Post Intervention – Fifteen/Sixteen

The teachers will re-administer a checklist to the students. The teachers will re-administer a survey to the students. The teachers will continue to observe student behaviors in the classroom.

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the interventions, the researchers will compare results of surveys, maintain checklists, take performance tests, and written tests throughout the action research project.

The student behavior checklist was created to document students' behavior and social habits. In addition, the teachers will use rubrics to score some of the students' test (performance and written). The students were monitored three times a week and their behavior was documented. The use of documentation allowed the teacher researchers to monitor the improvement of student's social skill behavior.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to improve students' social skills. To accomplish this objective the teacher researchers used cooperative learning techniques. Cooperative learning activities were used in each classroom three days a week for 25-40 minutes each day. The social skills were taught as the teacher researchers modeled appropriate social behavior. The teacher researchers modeled the use of quiet voices, use of encouraging words, and staying on task.

The students used charts and Venn diagrams to present information to the large group. The groups were assigned conflict role-play assignments that required them to use conflict management skills to resolve the matters presented. The groups were given projects that they had to complete and present to class. Observation of the group functioning led the teacher researchers to conclude that cooperative learning strategies helped students to improve their social skills.

Site A

The students at Site A were involved in a number of cooperative learning activities. The first five weeks were spent introducing the expectations for each cooperative group. Students were introduced to six-inch voices, listening to their group

members, doing their job, helping each other, respecting each other's opinions and staying on task. The students were given activities where they had to solve problems from their history lessons to develop a group solution. The activity required the students to use all of the skills they had been taught. When cooperative learning was first introduced to the students there were some problems. The students had a hard time obtaining consensus. It seemed there was always at least one person in the group who just did not want to participate. The teacher had to monitor the groups very closely. During the reflection time the teacher would reiterate the importance of working together to reach a common goal. By the third or fourth week the students had come to really work well as group. They would sometimes ask the advice of the teacher researcher but they were able to put their heads together to do a lot of problem solving.

The second five weeks the students started to enjoy being in groups to help one another. There were very few students who asked for the assistance of the teacher researcher because there was always someone in the group who could help them. At this point in the intervention the students read and answered questions as a group. They would help each other find answers in the reading selections. However, there were a few instances where some students would sit back and wait for the others to find the answers. When students called this to the teacher researchers' attention they allowed those groups to conduct a group meeting telling those students what they could do to help the group function better. After the meetings the students would become active. The other students seemed very pleased that they were able to solve their problem peacefully.

The students would jigsaw everyday. They would take a term, phrase, name or date to teach to someone else in their group. Then each group would present to the class what they had learned. This technique was used as a study tool. The students enjoyed interacting with one another.

The students also participated in Teams, Games and Tournaments (TGT) activities. After completion of a unit the students were given terms, phrases, names and dates to study. The students would study Monday through Thursday with their group members. Then on Friday they would have tournaments. The students would compete against other groups and bring points back to their base groups. The base group with the most points would receive a prize. After the assessment of the material was given on Friday each group would have their scores averaged and posted to see which groups were studying the hardest. Posting the grades made the students with the lower averages work harder to improve their grades. This activity was very successful. The students enjoyed the competitiveness. The students would also put positive pressure on those people who did not bring back a lot of points to the base group. They would encourage those students to study more often so they could bring more points back to the group.

The final five weeks of the intervention the students were given a project where they had to create their own communities using information that had been discussed in their social studies text. The students enjoyed this activity but because of the need for higher-level thinking skills and creativity the teacher researcher had to assist students with this projects. The teacher researcher would toss out ideas and the groups would have to decide which ideas they wanted to use. This project required students to reach

consensus. The students were successful. Of course some of their projects were superb and there were some that were mediocre. Most importantly the students learned how to work together to accomplish a goal. Every group experienced success.

The interventions used were very effective in improving students' social skills. The classroom became a hard working polite community with positive peer relationships. As a result of working in cooperative groups the students made new friends and everyone was accepted. Of the entire class, there was only one student who could not work in the group because of constant off task and disruptive behavior. The intervention was a great success. The intervention would be more effective if used from the beginning of the school year until the end. Cooperative learning techniques made learning enjoyable for students.

Site B

The objective of this project was to improve student's social skills through cooperative learning activities. The implementation of cooperative learning activities and the use of curriculum to improve social skills were selected to effect the desired changes.

Cooperative learning was used to teach social skills and was employed as an instructional technique in delivering subject matter content. Original plans called for social skills content to be introduced in phases over the course of the intervention. The phases included forming, norming, conforming, storming, performing and re-forming.

The forming stage of the intervention established the proper behavior guidelines that facilitate the effective use of social skills. In an effort to eliminate disrespectful behavior, student study groups were formed in order to create positive interdependence

among the students. During this early stage of the intervention, several students were reluctant to become active group participants.

The norming stage of the intervention concentrated on cooperative activities that focused on inclusion and respect. Classroom meetings were a very successful cooperative learning strategy and were utilized throughout the intervention. The classroom meetings fostered an atmosphere of inclusion among the members of the class. The students utilized classroom meetings to refocus their interactions with each other and with other classes. Classroom meetings became a very successful activity in the conforming stage of the intervention. The students developed their abilities to achieve group consensus as well as to clarify the thoughts and ideas of their fellow classmates.

The storming and performing stages of the intervention focused on hands-on cooperative activities that integrated achieving consensus among group members as well as developing skills that required the students to achieve positive interdependence. In addition to classroom meetings, the alphabet letter game was utilized to encourage the integration of ideas and consensus. This activity required the students to work in base groups, come to a consensus on the correct answer to a study question, and locate the proper letters of the alphabet that correctly spelled the answer. Each student in the base group would then hold up a letter to properly spell the correct answer. Another very successful cooperative activity utilized during this stage was a group project that required the students to create a medieval knight's helmet. This activity successfully incorporated communication, trust, conflict resolution and social skills.

The final stage of the intervention involved the transfer of the above-mentioned cooperative activities to assist the students in applying their learned skills across the curriculum. In order to facilitate this final stage the teacher researcher incorporated cooperative role-playing activities to review and apply the desired social skills.

Upon reflection, some of the strategies used for the intervention may need to be modified or discarded. Some of the suggestions made by the research literature worked out very well, whereas some of the strategies were not as effective as hoped.

At the middle grade level, students are very aware of the social dynamics of their classroom. The cooperative learning activities attempted to accomplish the intervention goals by incorporating a variety of methods. The students responded more positively to interpersonal than to intrapersonal activities as reflected in the behavioral checklist and teacher researcher reflections.

Classroom meetings were very successful in promoting prosocial skills among the students in the targeted class. The classroom meetings were a successful vehicle for promoting problem/conflict solving skills as well as developing a sense of community among the students. The students also participated in cooperative role-playing exercises that encouraged positive social interaction in dealing with real-life problems. The role-playing activity was reinforced through a handout that coordinated the structure of the activity.

A successful intervention strategy that the students participated in was the creation of a medieval knight helmet. This hands-on activity required a high degree of interpersonal cooperation. The students were very successful in meeting their goals during this activity. However, some of the credit may be due to the fact that the

students were allowed to form their own groups for this activity and that the intervention up to this point stressed cooperation, communication and problem-solving skills.

The use of graphic organizers in meeting the intervention goals was not as successful as planned for in the targeted class. The students did not perform as well when it came to cooperative activities that involved intraspective writing and sharing. The teacher researcher noticed long-standing interpersonal problems between several members of the class. These problems were however isolated to only a few members of the class and were often reflected during group sharing activities.

For many of the students, social interaction at the school is a big challenge in their lives. By being exposed to positive, prosocial behaviors within the classroom environment, students may be more directly equipped to deal with the social and academic challenges found there.

The teacher researcher believes that the utilization of cooperative learning activities assisted the students in their appreciation of others and the ability to work with other students toward achieving common goals. This data would indicate that the overall goals of the intervention were successfully accomplished.

Site C

The students were engaged in numerous cooperative learning activities. During the first five weeks the students were introduced to cooperative learning strategies. For example, students were taught how to use six-inch voices, how to show respect to peers and adults, how to stay on task, and how to work cooperatively with one another. The students were assigned to groups randomly in the beginning by a graph

constructed by favorite color. This allowed the students to see that they had something in common. The teacher researcher found that when the students had something in common they were able to work together better. In the groups the students were required to role-play situations that involved conflict and problem solving, this activity was used to help students learn how to handle difficult situations using teamwork. Completion of this activity allowed students to demonstrate their knowledge of basic social skills.

At the beginning of the research project students showed difficulty in the area of cooperative learning. To describe their weaknesses, they could not reach consensus, or agree with another. Most times students had good ideas and solutions, but they could not agree as a group. Also, they had a hard time using six-inch voices. When the teacher researcher noticed the areas where the students needed help, direct teaching and remediation were immediately used. While the students reflected the teacher researcher would always emphasize the importance of being able to effectively work together. Also, during reflection time the students had an opportunity to share their feelings about cooperative learning. The first five weeks were extremely difficult for the students, but they did make some progress within their individual groups as time progressed.

During the next five weeks the students became more aware of how to work with and enjoy their peers. The students still needed assistance and direction from the teacher researcher but they were learning to work together in their groups. At this stage the students were expected to function as a group. To explain, the students were given

a job to perform and each member had to show responsibility. Assignments were created and developed to help students master working and depending on one another.

Sometimes conflict would arise which would prevent the students from successfully completing the activities. When these things happened the teacher researcher would call students into focus groups. In focus groups they would write down one thing that was bothering them and the teacher researcher would randomly pick someone and they would focus on resolving that one conflict with all of the group members input. Usually, after focus groups the students were able to stay on task. At this point more often than not, the groups were successful.

Students actively participated in word splash. Word splash is a collection of key terms or concepts taken from a chapter, textbook, newspaper, magazine articles, or written passages. The terms selected represent important key information. Students enjoyed this activity because they were able to quiz each other to demonstrate that they knew how to make accurate connections between the topic and the terms. This activity helped the students with communication, peer interaction, and they were able to help each other study new information.

The students also actively participated with roundtable. This technique used the students' ability to brainstorm and review. During roundtable a question is posed and students take turns recording answers on the paper as it is passed around the table. When time is called, teams count their responses. Answers are then shared and validated by the entire class. This also helped the class to affectionately accept one another. The students enjoy working with one another and competing against other

groups. This activity was mostly used at the end of the week for review of a concept presented in class.

In the final stages of the intervention the students worked together to complete a research project about themselves. The students worked together to create positive self-images of themselves through a math lesson. This activity required the students to work together and research themselves and their group members. With the topic the students divided up the work labor and presented their newfound information the class. It was marvelous to see them work together so well. This activity allowed the students the opportunity to work in a group instead of working alone. They met to collaborate with one another, and they hardly sought advice from the teacher researcher. The students successfully worked with one another to accomplish a common goal.

Upon reflection, the teacher researcher noticed that all of the activities worked well, but of course some were better than others were. All of the students were able to gain some insight from one or more of the given strategies.

It was found that learning could be structured competitively, so that students work against each other, or, individually, so that students work alone. With cooperative learning the students learn to share a common goal. Cooperation dominated the classroom during the final stages of research. The strategies helped make students gain in student achievement, critical and creative thinking, group interaction, social skills, and mutual respect.

After looking at the group success the teacher researcher found that students were more successful when they chose whom they wanted to work with. This also was a development in the room. The students were now able to maturely and cooperatively

work with their friends. The students were able to accomplish more working together than alone.

Site D

The objective of this project was to improve student's social skills thorough the use of cooperative learning techniques. The behaviors targeted in the intervention were inappropriate language, disrespectful behavior, following directions and inappropriate physical contact. To accomplish the objective the six phases of introduction of social skills was implemented into the physical education curriculum. Cooperative learning strategies and activities were incorporated in class lessons three times a week for sixteen weeks in order to enhance social skills.

Forming was the first phase of the action plan. The purpose of this phase was to organize groups and establish behavior guidelines. The teacher researcher introduced and modeled social skills such as appropriate voices, using encouraging words, being a good listener, and following school rules. Journals were given to each student to write wrap around stems that focused on self-reflection and self-awareness. The teacher introduced the concept of "peace talks" or class meetings as a tool for class discussions and processing questions.

Norming was the second phase of the intervention. The purpose of this phase was to complete assigned tasks and build effective relationships. The social skills targeted include listening with focus, encouraging others and respecting each other's opinion. Each student participated in a performance assessment role-play depicting various social situations. Graphic organizers such as T charts and umbrellas with

raindrops were used to reinforce the importance of teamwork, encouragement, and cooperation in the physical education program.

Conforming was the third phase used by the teacher researcher to improve student's social skills. The purpose of this phase was to promote critical thinking and maximize the learning of all the participants. The social skills targeted in this phase included paraphrasing ideas, giving examples and developing general alternatives. The strategy utilized was reflective PMI activities. Some of the methods the students used to reflect included PMI class discussions and journal reflections.

The fourth phase of the social skills action plan was the storming phase. The purpose of this phase was to enable the student to function effectively and work as a team. The social skills targeted were keeping an open mind, trying to agree, and contributing ideas. Many teambuilding activities such as board games, memory games, and the letter game using a word wall were utilized to get children interacting with one another. The students continued to reflect in their journals using teacher researcher selected wrap around stems. The students also engaged in a group share activity that reinforced trust, listening, and communication skills.

The next phase used by the teacher researcher to improve student's social skills was called the performing phase. The purpose of this phase was to foster higher-level thinking skills. The social skills targeted included elaborating on ideas, justifying ideas and reaching consensus. A self-reflective card sort activity was implemented. Students needed to recognize and be willing to share one positive quality and one negative quality they find in themselves. The next task was to come up with a possible solution to improve one's negative quality in a positive manner. Student's responses were put

on index cards and made into a word wall for comparisons. Students also participated in Agree/Disagree activities where they needed to express their opinion and be able to explain why.

The final phase of the action plan was called re-forming. The purpose of this phase was to apply positive social skills across the curriculum and transfer the skills into life beyond the classroom. The focus was to begin the cycle of social skills again. The students completed journal reflections and class discussions on empathy, responsibility, and self-esteem. Evaluation of student's progress was completed using a checklist for pre and post assessment.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Prior to the intervention, a student survey was given. The survey (Appendix B) assessed the level of responsibility that each student was taking for his or her own behavior. Second, the students were evaluated by teacher observation using a behavioral checklist (Appendix A). The checklist targeted the areas of inappropriate language, disrespectful behavior, following directions and inappropriate physical contact. The purpose of the checklist was to monitor students' behavior to see if working in cooperative groups would improve their social skills.

Teacher researchers also used journals to record anecdotal observation. In review of the journals, there were time periods when the students exhibited poor social skills.

On several occasions the teacher researchers noted that students were using inappropriate language when addressing their classmates. There were also incidences of inappropriate physical contact. As the intervention progressed students did make

tremendous improvements when interacting in social situations. After working in cooperative groups, the students became courteous and helpful towards one another. Inappropriate physical contact was almost nonexistent according to the teacher researchers journals.

Analysis of the pre and post intervention students' surveys showed a change in students' awareness. The students realized that they were exhibiting inappropriate social behaviors. The students were able to correct their social behavior more often than in the past. There was drastic improvement in this area.

In order to assess the effects of cooperative learning on student behavior a percentage of incidents were recorded throughout the intervention. These data are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6.

Table 4

Summary of Student Survey

Question	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Excessive talking	29%	20%	49%	3%
Interrupts class	16%	17%	55%	13%
Physical contact	12%	8%	50%	31%
Ridiculing classmates	10%	42%	40%	9%

Table 5

Summary of Student Survey

Question	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Inappropriate behavior(classmates)	16%	14%	52%	19%
Inappropriate behavior(students)	16%	16%	48%	21%

Table 6

Summary of Student Survey

Question	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Inappropriate behavior(classmates)	10%	17%	54%	20%
Inappropriate behavior(students)	40	15%	33%	13%

Tables 4, 5, and 6 show the results of a student survey. In the survey 101 students were asked about their classmates behavior as well as their own behavior. The survey results prior to the intervention revealed that the students had a hard time identifying inappropriate behaviors. In this survey that was given after the intervention, the students were able to identify their inappropriate behaviors as well as their classmates. Although some inappropriate behaviors did exist after the intervention, the number of incidences decreased drastically. The intervention was successful in helping the students learn to cooperate socially with one another and recognize their behavior.

In analysis of the pre and post teacher checklist the teacher researcher noticed a decrease in negative behaviors. Students were engaging in more positive relationships with their peers. The improvement in the student's behavior also helped them in the areas of following directions.

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data, students in the third, fifth, and sixth grade classes showed a drastic improvement in the area of social skills. Through the use of cooperative learning students accepted responsibility for their behavior and became better equipped to handle themselves in social settings

The teacher researcher at Site A created a student checklist to monitor the behavior of students. The reader will note that there were four categories of behavior being observed. The first category was inappropriate language. The second category was disrespectful behavior. The third category was following directions and the fourth category was inappropriate physical contact.

The teacher researcher observed students over the course of a 2-week period. There were a total of 153 incidences. There were 45 incidences of inappropriate language, 42 incidences of disrespectful behavior, 55 incidences of not following directions and 11 incidences inappropriate physical contact. Figure 9 shows the percent of incidences for each category.

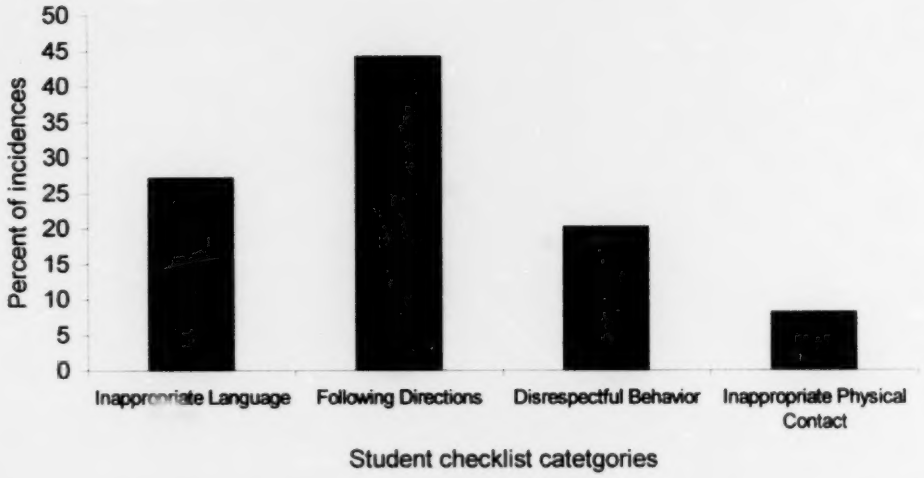

Figure 9. Percent of incidences for each category on student checklist from Site A.

An analysis of the data suggest the greatest number of incidences fell under the disrespectful behavior category. As the end of the school year approached the students seemed to be highly frustrated and easily irritated. There were several occasions where students would raise their hands while someone else was speaking. When reminded of the undesirable behavior there were no repeat offenders unlike in the pre-data the students had to be reminded several times daily of desirable behaviors. The second highest category was inappropriate language. One reason for their lack of appropriate language at the end of the school year was that they knew the testing was over, so they thought that learning was over as well. The last two categories, following directions and inappropriate physical contact, were the lowest of the four categories. The students did improve their listening skills. The teacher researcher did not have to repeat the directions as frequently as during the pre-data collection. The number of incidences for each category decreased by half. It is evident that the cooperative

learning activities did help students with their undesirable behaviors. However, some of the behaviors still exist so there is still need for improvement.

The teacher researcher recorded the number of incidences of students' misconduct. There were three ranges of misconduct: mild, moderate and severe. The teacher researcher recorded data over a two-week period. There were a total of 10 discipline referrals. Figure 10 shows the percent of discipline referrals for each category.

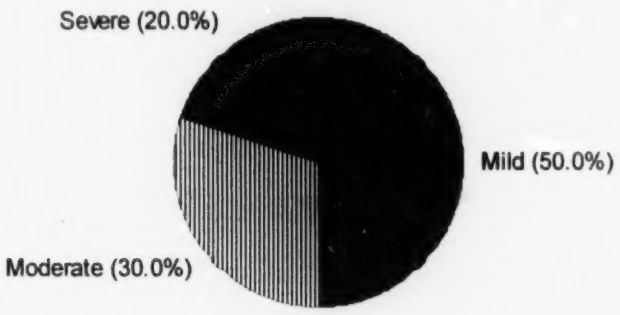

Figure 10. Percent of discipline referrals for each category from Site A.

An analysis of the data suggests that the largest number of discipline referrals fell in the mild category. Half of the referrals in the mild category were written for students who did not wear their uniforms or wore braids in their hair. This number has slightly increased since the pre-data due to the weather and students not having uniform colors as a part of their summer attire. The next category was moderate which also slightly increased as well. The moderate category consisted of students' three violations of the mild category or inappropriate use of language. The severe category did decrease. The students did learn to keep their hands to themselves and to tell an adult if they felt a

peer had mistreated them. There were still a few incidences in the severe category but the category shows that the cooperative learning activities did help students to be better equipped in social settings. The mild and moderate categories increased due to the decrease in the severe category. The students' misconducts became less severe as intervention strategies were used.

The teacher researcher created a social skills checklist that was used to monitor the behavior of the students in the targeted class over a two-week period at the beginning and end of the intervention. The total number of incidences for the last two weeks of the intervention was 89. There were 11 incidences of inappropriate language, 29 incidences of disrespectful behavior, 42 incidences of not following directions and 7 incidences of inappropriate physical contact. Figure 11 indicates the number of incidents in each category.

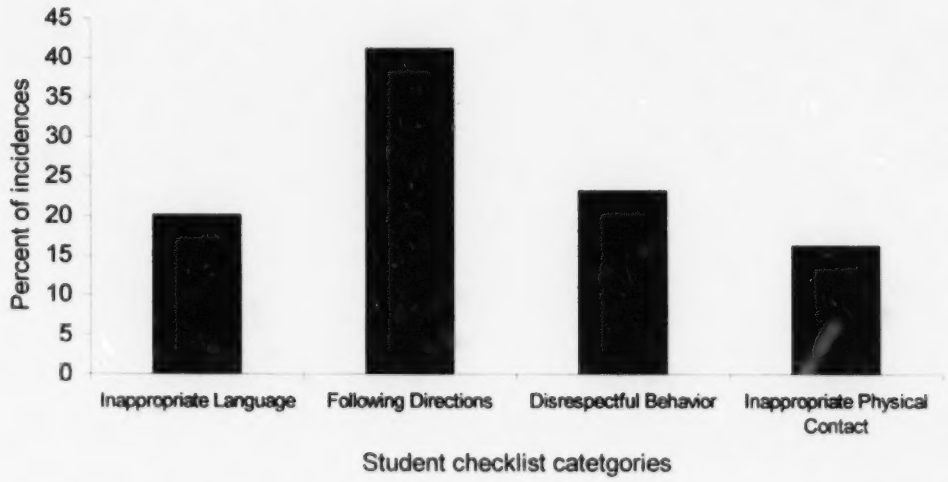

Figure 11. Observed behaviors for each category on the social skills checklist from Site B.

An analysis of the data indicate that the total number of classroom incidents during the two week post period have declined from 295 to 89. The incidents of inappropriate language dropped from 20% at the beginning of the intervention to 12% at the end of the intervention. Inappropriate physical contact declined from 16% at the beginning of the intervention to 8% at the end of the intervention. The above data also indicates an increase in the number incidents of disrespectful behavior from 23% at the beginning of the intervention to 33% at the end of the intervention. There was also a slight increase in the category of not following directions. This category rose from 41% in the beginning of the intervention to 47% at the end of the intervention. This data would indicate that there is a need to increase the emphasis on listening skills for the targeted class. Contrary to the above statistics the teacher researcher noticed an overall social skill improvement with the targeted class. While the percent of incidences rose in two categories the total number of incidences in each of the categories saw a sharp decline

After the cooperative learning strategies were implemented, the teacher researcher collected the number of discipline referrals where students in the targeted class were written up for misconduct. The data was collected over a two-week period. There were a total of 23 discipline referrals. Figure 12 indicates the percent of incidences in each category.

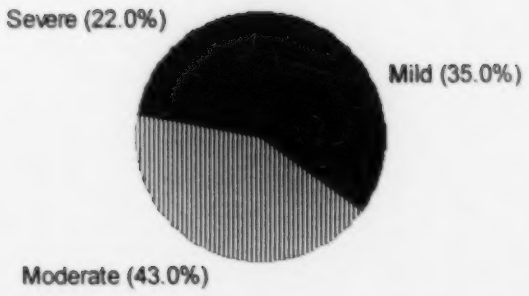

Figure 12. Percent of discipline referrals for each category from Site B.

An analysis of the discipline referral data indicates a slight decrease in the total number of referrals. The largest decrease fell in the category of severe referrals. The decrease in severe discipline referrals reflected lower incidences of aggressive physical contact and behavior. The data would indicate that the intervention strategies that incorporated social skill development were very successful in decreasing inappropriate physical contact and severe discipline referrals. These data also reflect a positive response to the social skills activities introduced during the intervention. There was a slight decrease in mild discipline referrals and a slight increase in moderate discipline referrals. The data also indicates the need to seek ways to curb off-task classroom behavior that is indicated by the rise in moderate case discipline referrals. The slight decrease in mild discipline case referrals indicate that the intervention strategies are successful but need to be incorporated throughout the school year.

The teacher researcher at Site C used the student checklist after the intervention was completed to check to see if the intervention was successful or not. The behaviors were observed for two additional weeks. Over the course of the two weeks there were 186 total incidences. There were 27 incidences of inappropriate language, 40

incidences of disrespectful behavior, 94 incidences of following directions, and 25 incidences of inappropriate physical contact. Figure 13 indicates the number of incidents in each category.

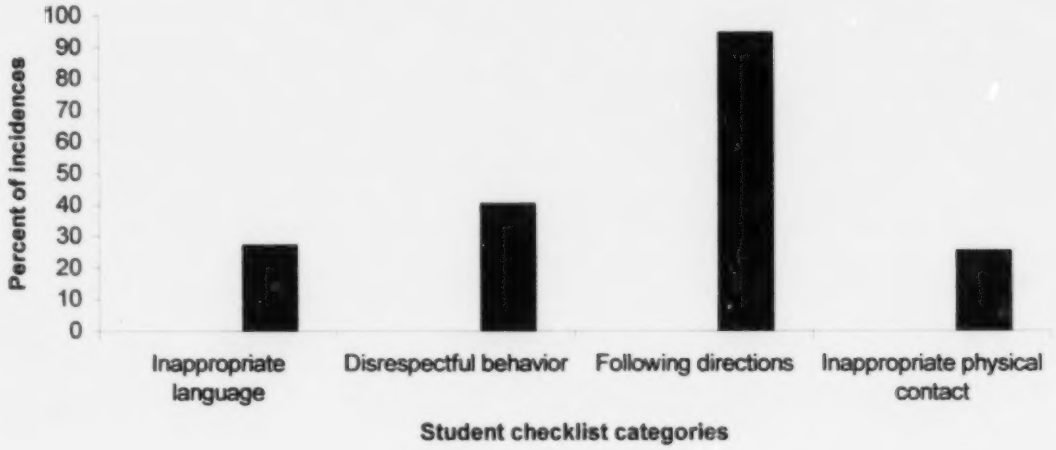

Figure 13. Percent of incidences for each category on student checklist from Site C.

An analysis of the data shows that the total number of classroom incidents decreased by almost half. In the beginning of the intervention the number of incidents recorded was 487, this number dropped to 186. The number dropped by 38% overall. In the area of inappropriate language it decreased by 17%. The students learned to talk to each other and follow the rules of using appropriate language. The above data also indicate that the number if incidents for disrespectful behavior decreased by 25%. The students began to show each other and the teacher researcher more self controlled behavior at the end of the intervention. This helped the classroom to run very smoothly and efficiently. The data shows that the students were touched by the intervention in a positive way. The number of incidents for following directions decreased as well by 69%. This indicates that the students were able to listen more effectively and follow

directions. There was also a slight decrease in the area of inappropriate physical contact by 9%. The data would indicate that there are still some improvements to be made in this classroom. However, there was a significant increase in positive social behavior.

In addition to the student checklist the teacher researcher also noticed a decrease in the amount of discipline referrals that were given to students. This data was also collected over a two-week period. There were a total of 10 discipline referrals. Figure 14 indicates the percent of incidences in each category.

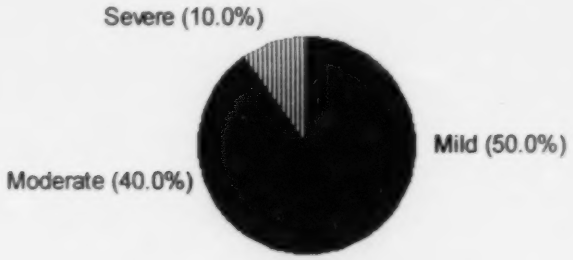

Figure 14. Percent of discipline referrals for each category from Site C.

An analysis of the data suggests that there was an overall decrease in discipline referrals that were given out to students. The largest amount fell in the mild category. There were a total of 5 referrals given out in this area compared to 7 that were given out at the beginning of the intervention. These data indicate that the students were able exhibit more self-control and self-discipline. As a result, the students also increased their ability to follow directions, which resulted in improvement. The moderate category was next with 4 referrals in this area there was no improvement. The data indicates that the students need to work on listening and staying on task. The smallest category fell in the moderate area. There was only 1 discipline referral given in this area compared to 2

at the beginning of the intervention. The students learned to exhibit appropriate social skills, which in turn helped their overall behavior in class.

The teacher researcher recorded the number of incidences of students' misconduct. There were 3 ranges of misconduct: mild, moderate and severe. The teacher researcher recorded data over a two-week period. There were a total of 10 discipline referrals.

After the cooperative learning strategies were implemented the teacher researcher utilized a student checklist to monitor the behavior of students'. The four categories of behaviors being observed were inappropriate language, disrespectful behavior, following directions, and inappropriate physical contact. The teacher researcher observed students over the course of a 2-week period. There were a total of 154 incidences. There were 9 incidences of inappropriate language, 51 incidences of disrespectful behavior, 74 incidences of not following directions, and 20 incidences of inappropriate physical contact. Figure 15 shows the number of incidences for each category.

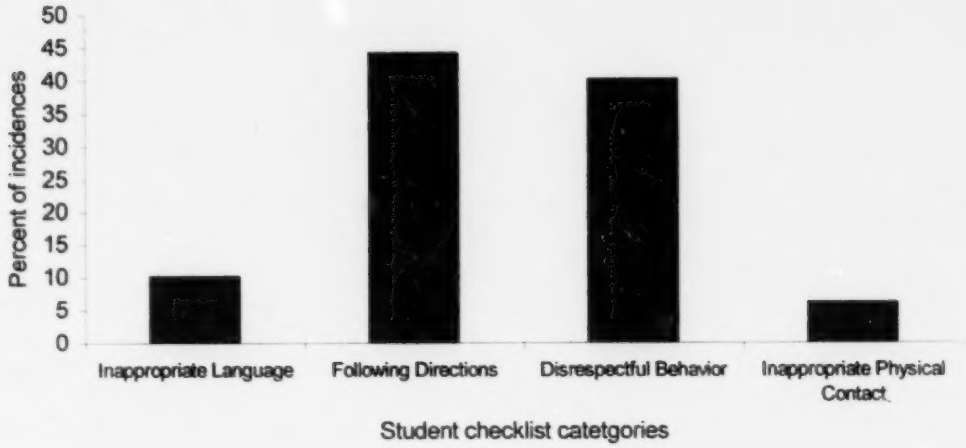

Figure 15. Number of incidences for each category on student checklist from Site D.

An analysis of the student checklist data indicates a significant decrease in the total number of documented incidences from 277 occurrences in the pre-data observations to 154 occurrences in the post-data observations. The largest decreases fell under the category of disrespectful behavior. Pre-data observations shows 40% with post-data dropping 7% to 33% in this category. The second highest decrease fell into the categories of inappropriate language and following directions. Each of these categories decreased in incidences by 4% from the pre to post observations. There are a variety of reasons that might explain the decrease. Implementation of cooperative learning techniques and strategies, cooperative games and activities implemented in the lessons and more concise teacher directions and focus on social skills may have helped improve the targeted areas of student behavior.

The teacher researcher also recorded the number of incidences of student misconduct through the use of behavior referrals. Mild, moderate, and severe are the 3 ranges of misconduct. The mild category would be incidences where students were

talking or off task. The moderate category would consist of disrespectful behavior or being intentionally rude or disruptive. The severe category would consist of incidences where students would threaten or hit another student or create a situation in which the teacher would not be able to conduct class instruction. The teacher researcher recorded this data over the course of a two-week period. There were a total of 6 discipline referrals written. Figure 16 shows the percent of discipline referrals for each category.

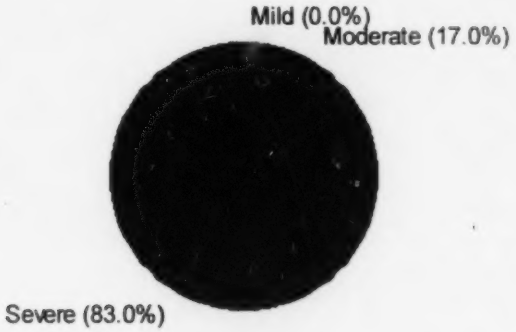

Figure 16. Number of discipline referrals for each category from Site D.

An analysis of the data suggests that the largest number of discipline referrals fell into the severe category. The moderate category was the second highest. No incidences were observed in the mild category. There are a variety of reasons that might explain the high percentage of occurrences in the severe category and the 7% increase of incidences from the pre-post data observations. The fact that behavior referrals are given for more extreme cases of misconduct, 5th grade "spring fever" and increased temperatures and humidity coinciding with the post-data observations at the end of the school year may have contributed to the increase of occurrences in the severe category especially in the category of inappropriate physical contact.

Overall, the data would indicate that the intervention strategies that incorporated social skills development were successful in decreasing incidences of student misconduct.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data, students in the targeted classes showed improvement in the use of appropriate social skills. Through the use of cooperative learning experiences and techniques, students exhibited an overall increase of appropriate social behavior. The results were observed through the use of student checklist and teacher researcher observation and reflection. Students improved their use of appropriate social skills because of the utilization of cooperative learning techniques during the 16-week intervention. Teacher modeling and active student engagement enabled the students to stay on task and improve their social behavior. On several occasions the teacher researchers needed to redirect and adjust the intervention techniques in order to complete a given task. After the invention strategies were implemented the teacher researchers observed improvement in student behavior and problem-solving skills. As a result, there was improvement in peer relations, following directions, and the ability to maintain a positive and encouraging attitude.

In conclusion, the teacher researchers observed that the intervention and strategies were effective in improving student social skills. However, the teacher researchers noted that the intervention strategies would have been more effective if they were implemented at the beginning of school rather than midyear. Further, the teacher researchers believed cooperative learning was an effective intervention

strategy. The strategy helped with the development of appropriate social skills for all students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Name:_____

Date:_____

Student Checklist / Pre and Post Observation

Inappropriate Language ➢ Shut Up ➢ Swears ➢ Inappropriate tone of voice	
Disrespectful Behavior ➢ Teasing ➢ Name calling ➢ Interrupting ➢ Hands up when speaking	
Following Directions ➢ Listening ➢ Off task behavior	
Inappropriate Physical Contact ➢ Pushing/Shoving ➢ Hitting ➢ Other aggressive behaviors	

Appendix B

Name: _____

Date: _____

Student Survey /Pre and Post Observation Survey

Directions: Please read all of the questions and it choices. Choose the one that answers the question the best.

1. Do you think your classmates talk too much during class?

   Always Usually Sometimes Never

2. Do you think your classmates use appropriate language in class?

   Always Usually Sometimes Never

3. How often do your classmates interrupt class?

   Always Usually Sometimes Never

4. How often do your classmates follow directions the first time given?

   Always Usually Sometimes Never

5. While at school how often does pushing and shoving occur?

   Always Usually Sometimes Never

6. How often do your classmates make fun of others in class?

   Always Usually Sometimes Never

7. At school do you feel your classmates display inappropriate behaviors?

   Always Usually Sometimes Never

8. At school do you feel you display inappropriate behavior?

   Always Usually Sometimes Never